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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 5526
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 3246
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 3111
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 001010

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, INL/AEE BUHLER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCRM](#) [SOCI](#) [SNAR](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: INL-FUNDED EQUIPMENT PRESENTED TO COUNTER
NARCOTICS SERVICE

¶1. SUMMARY: On August 6, the Charge presented two light vehicles and twenty drug identification kits to the State Counter Narcotics Service of Turkmenistan. The donation was part of the ongoing INL counternarcotics project. SCNS officials praised our bilateral cooperation and expressed gratitude for the continuing USG assistance. They also stressed the need for additional training opportunities. END SUMMARY.

BACKGROUND

¶2. In March 2006, the Embassy signed the first Amendment to the Letter of Agreement between the Government of the United States and the Government of Turkmenistan on Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement Assistance. That Amendment provided additional USG assistance in the amount of \$450,000 for four projects, including a Counternarcotics Project (\$150,000) that was designed to improve the ability of Turkmenistan counternarcotics forces to interdict narcotics in transit across Turkmenistan by training and equipping counternarcotics investigative units in the field. The USG agreed to provide basic equipment, including two light vehicles and 20 drug/precursor test kits, for counternarcotics investigators as part of this project. Additionally, USG trainers will provide specialized training on topics such as operations planning, vehicle stops, raid execution management, undercover operations management, and confidential source management.

¶3. On August 6, the Charge participated at an official handover ceremony for two Toyota Corollas light vehicles and 20 narcotics identification master kits to the State Counter-Narcotics Service (SCNS). Colonel Muhammed Orazov, First Deputy Chief of the SCNS, received the equipment on behalf of the Turkmen government. The ceremony took place at the SCNS headquarters building. The Heads of the SCNS International Relations and Illicit Drug Circulation Prevention Departments were also present at the meeting.

¶4. In his opening remarks, Colonel Orazov praised our ongoing bilateral cooperation in counternarcotics programs. He pointed out that the USG's training and equipment assistance to their newly created agency were invaluable assets enhancing their capacity building process. Orazov stated that the United States had

tremendous experience in countering the drug problem, which they are eager to learn. When the Charge commented that the scale of the drug problem in the United States remains regrettably large, and that it has not yet won the war against drugs, Orazov emphasized that the United States has a well-managed law enforcement system which has been successfully tackling drug abuse. Both sides concurred that the war against drugs is never-ending, but the main task is to minimize the problem.

¶5. Following the opening remarks, the Charge and Orazov signed the end-user certificates and exchanged the documents with a handshake. The attendees then examined the donated drug test kits on display in the meeting room. Orazov invited the Charge and others to look at the vehicles parked in the backyard of the SCNS building. When exhibiting the brand new Toyotas, Orazov observed that the vehicles would help them pursue runaway drug dealers. (NOTE: SCNS insisted on the donation of white Corollas and refused to accept any other models or colors. END NOTE.)

¶7. COMMENT: During his welcoming speech, Orazov stressed that while they are happy about the donated equipment, they would be even more grateful for training opportunities. Orazov confessed that the SCNS staff, especially junior officers, lack basic law enforcement skills and they have a lot to learn from their American counterparts. INL has scheduled two DEA Basic Drug Enforcement and Tactical Seminars for early 2010 and training on the use of narcotics identification systems will be delivered next week. END COMMENT.

MILES